

Message Text

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP (KISSINGER, HENRY A.)

SUBJECT: TRAVELING PRESS REPORTAGE; RADIO/TV

FOR AMBASSADOR ANDERSON FROM S/PRS

1. LIMITED COVERAGE SECRETARY'S TRIP OCTOBER 10 MORNING
NEWS PROGRAMS. NOTHING ON TV, ONLY FOLLOWING TWO
REPORTS ON RADIO.

2. JAMES ANDERSON -- (GROUP W NEWS - WTOP RADIO) --
KISSINGER'S FOURTH TRIP TO THE ME THIS YEAR COMES AT A
TIME WHEN THE SOVIETS ARE APPARENTLY MOVING TO REGAIN THEIR
OWN INFLUENCE IN THE ARAB WORLD, PARTICULARLY IN EGYPT.
SENIOR U.S. OFFICIALS CONFIRM THAT THE SOVIETS HAVE BEEN
SENDING THE EGYPTIANS SPARE PARTS FOR THEIR MILITARY
EQUIPMENT. THE U.S. OFFICIAL SAID HE WOULD NOT BE
SURPRISED IF THE SOVIETS BEGIN SUPPLYING THE EGYPTIANS
WITH NEW WEAPONS ONCE AGAIN. IT IS HIGHLY PROBABLE,
ACCORDING TO THIS SENIOR OFFICIAL, THAT THE SOVIET LEADER,
BREZHNEV, WILL PAY A VISIT TO CAIRO SOON.

ACCORDING TO U.S. ASSESSMENTS, THE ISRAELIS HAVE MORE
THAN REGAINED THEIR MILITARY STRENGTH IN THE YEAR SINCE THE
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OCTOBER 1973 WAR AND SO HAS SYRIA. THE EGYPTIANS

ACCORDING TO THIS ASSESSMENT ARE SLIGHTLY LESS STRONG THAN THEY WERE BEFORE THE WAR. PRESIDENT SADAT OF EGYPT

CLEARLY WANTS TO CORRECT THIS SITUATION AND THE SOVIETS ARE STILL THE MOST LOGICAL SOURCE OF ARMS FOR EGYPT.

3. MARVIN KALB -- (CBS RADIO - FIRST LINE REPORT) --
PRESIDENT FORD COMES TO THE AIRPORT TO SAY GOODBYE TO SECRETARY KISSINGER AND KISSINGER TELLS THE PRESIDENT THAT AMERICA AT LONG LAST IS AT PEACE WITH ITSELF, THEN HE IS OFF TO CAIRO.

IT WAS AN ALMOST SURREALISTIC SCENE -- PAST MIDNIGHT, ANDREWS AFB, MARYLAND, SECRETARY KISSINGER'S BLUE AND WHITE JET GLISTENING UNDER STRONG TELEVISION LIGHTS, THE FOOTLOOSE DIPLOMAT PREPARING TO LEAVE ON HIS SIXTH PEACE-MAKING EFFORT TO THE ME IN THE LAST YEAR. THEN IN THE VIP LOUNGE, WHERE COFFEE IS BEING SERVED BY AF ENLISTED MEN, DEAN BURCH, THE PRESIDENTIAL ADVISOR SHOWS UP WITH HIS WIFE, THEN ROY ASH AND ARMSTRONG AND RUMSFELD, GENERAL SCOWCROFT OF THE WHITE HOUSE -- FOLLOWED ALMOST IMMEDIATELY BY A HALF DOZEN CABINET MEMBERS, DEFENSE SECRETARY SCHLESINGER PUFFING ON HIS PIPE, AGRICULTURE SECRETARY BUTZ BUSILY SHAKING HANDS AMONG THEM.

IT WAS ALL A PRELUDE TO AN UNUSUAL PRESIDENTIAL APPEARANCE. MR. FORD DRIVING OUT TO ANDREWS TO BID FAREWELL TO HIS SECRETARY OF STATE, WHO HAS SUDDENLY COME UNDER SHARP CRITICISM FOR HIS ROLE IN CHILE, CYPRUS, WIRETAPPING AND DETENTE AND THE LIKE. THE PRESIDENT NO DOUBT WANTED TO SHOW SUPPORT FOR HIS ROVING DIPLOMAT AND TO UNDERSCORE AMERICA'S COMMITMENT TO A JUST AND DURABLE PEACE IN THE ME. MR. FORD FRATERNIZED WITH NEWSMEN, DUCKED INTO THE PLANE WITH KISSINGER FOR A LAST MINUTE CONFERENCE, DESCRIBED THE SECRETARY AS UNUSUAL AND GIFTED, THEN BEFORE THE MICROPHONES AND THE LIGHTS, BLESSED HIS MISSION.

KISSINGER WAS OBVIOUSLY GRATEFUL AS HE BOARDED HIS PLANE AND THE PRESIDENT GOT BACK INTO HIS LIMOUSINE FOR THE RIDE BACK TO THE WHITE HOUSE. IT WAS A COMMAND PERFORMANCE,
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BUT IT RAISED ONE LARGE QUESTION -- WHETHER THE PRESIDENT BY CONTINUOUSLY COMPLIMENTING HIS SECRETARY OF STATE WAS ACTUALLY DRAWING ATTENTION TO THE SECRETARY'S NEW VULNERABILITY AMONG SOME MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND THE PRESS. A FEW WEEKS AGO AT THE UN MR. FORD ALSO PRAISED KISSINGER IN A DEPARTURE FROM HIS PREPARED ADDRESS. THE SECRETARY HAS INDICATED TO FRIENDS THAT HE DID NOT SOLICIT THESE COMPLIMENTS FROM THE PRESIDENT, BUT THEY CAME BECAUSE

OF MR. FORD'S OBVIOUS CONCERN THAT THE CRITICISM OF
KISSINGER MIGHT ACTUALLY END UP HARMING NOT ONLY KISSINGER

BUT THE NATION'S FOREIGN POLICY AS WELL.

FOR HIS PART THE SECRETARY SEEMS PHILOSOPHICAL ABOUT THE
CRITICISM. EVEN AS HE BEGINS HIS LATEST TOUR OF THE
ME HE IS CONSCIOUS OF THE FACT THAT THIS TIME HE DOES NOT
FLY INTO CAIRO ON A MAGIC CARPET, A DIPLOMATIC SUPER "K".
HE FLEW IN WITH A SOMEWHAT TARNISHED REPUTATION, AT
LEAST AT HOME AND AMONG SOME CRITICS IN WESTERN EUROPE.
HE NO LONGER CHOOSES TO CALL UP REPORTERS AND ARGUE ABOUT
THEIR JUDGMENTS. HE CAN CONSIDER IT INEVITABLE THAT AFTER
WATERGATE THERE WILL BE SPIRITED CRITICISM OF FOREIGN
POLICY, AN AREA OF NATIONAL CONCERN THAT WAS UNTOUCHED
DURING THE DYING DAYS OF THE NIXON ADMINISTRATION.

KISSINGER HOPES THAT IN TIME THIS WILL ALL LEVEL OFF AND
HIS EFFECTIVENESS WILL NOT BE BADLY DAMAGED. HE WORRIES,
HOWEVER, ABOUT FOREIGNERS GETTING THE IDEA THAT WATERGATE
WAS NOT THE FAULT OF ONE INDIVIDUAL BUT THE FAULT OF THE
SYSTEM ITSELF. IN THIS PHILOSOPHICAL MOOD RESIGNATION IS
NOT OUT OF THE QUESTION THOUGH THERE IS NO SIGN THAT HE
PLANS TO RESIGN ANY TIME SOON. HIS PRESENCE IN THIS
VOLATILE PART OF THE WORLD IS A DIFFERENT KIND OF SIGN, IN
FACT THAT HE IS STILL PRESSING FOR A COMPROMISE SETTLEMENT
AND BOTH SIDES, THE ARABS AND THE ISRAELIS WANT HIM ALONE
TO MAKE THAT EFFORT.

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